

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 were pending in this application. By this amendment, Claims 1 and 5 to 14 have been amended and Claim 4 has been cancelled, to more particularly point out and distinctly claim Applicants' invention.

The Examiner's comments regarding the previously filed Information Disclosure Statement have been noted. The Examiner's attention is directed to the attached copies of references, abstracts, and related patents or publications, which correspond to references mentioned in the IDS.

The Abstract and specification have been objected to. The Examiner's attention is directed to the amendments above, wherein the bases of the objections are believed to have been overcome.

Claims 4 to 10 and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner's attention is directed to the amendments above, wherein the bases of this rejection are believed to have been overcome.

Claims 1 and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Bonfils, French Patent No. 2,837,436 ("Bonfils"). Also, Claims 1 and 5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Bonfils (?) or Inaba et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,092,654 ("Inaba").

Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bonfils in view of Inaba, Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inaba in view of Fujita et al., U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2002/0096932 ("Fujita"), Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bonfils in view of Geller et al., U.S. Patent No. 3,273,877 ("Geller"), and Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bonfils. Claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Inaba, Claims 9 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inaba in view of Benson, U.S. Patent No. 5,816,653 ("Benson"), and Claims 11 to 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inaba in view of Japanese Patent No. 238776 ("Japanese Patent").

The above rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner's attention is again directed to the amendments above, especially Claim 1 as amended. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate language regarding, among other things, structure of the torsion bar and the L-shaped arm at the rear end.

With regard to Claim 1, the only independent claim, it was the Examiner's position that this claim is unpatentable because Bonfils discloses a structure such that the front end of a cloth member 3 is connected to a rod 11 supported by a connecting rod 9 which is pivotable forward and backward around a rotary section 10 so as to displace the front end of the cloth member 3 forward and backward. However, in order to displace the lower cloth spring 31b of the present invention from a solid line to a chain line shown in Figs. 4 and 6, it is necessary that the rear end of the lower cloth spring 31b is connected to the rear end supporting frame 14 supported by the L-shaped arms 15, which is made pivotable by the torsion bar 11, and not that the rear end of the lower cloth spring 31b is firmly connected. When the movable frame 12 pivots forward, the rear end supporting frame 14 also pivots forward, resulting in upward displacement of the lower cloth spring 31b in the vicinity corresponding to the position of the buttocks.

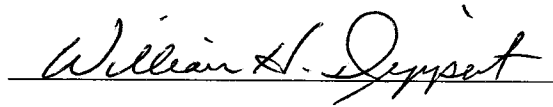
In this regard, since the rear end of the cloth member 3 of Bonfils is firmly fixed, this kind of displacement would not occur, and when the connection rod 9 and the rod 11 pivot forward, the vicinity corresponding to the buttocks would show little displacement, and the vicinity of the front end of the cloth member 3 would just descend. Then, the function and the effect of change in supporting pressure in the vicinity of the buttocks described at page 16, line 10, to page 17, line 18, cannot be exhibited.

For the reasons above, Applicants believe that Claim 1 as amended is clearly allowable over the cited art. Moreover, the remaining claims are each dependent on Claim 1, and if Claim 1 is allowable, then the dependent claims should be allowable as well. Withdrawal of the rejections under §§ 102(b) and 103(a) is earnestly urged.

Reconsideration and allowance of all the claims herein are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "William H. Dippert", is written over a horizontal line.

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